SPY×FAMILY MISSION 77

BY TATSUYA ENDO

チク TICK
タク TICK TOCK

TOCK
タク

TOSS TURN
ゴソ ゴソ

JOLT
ガバッ

WAHHH!

TRANSLATION: CASEY LOE LETTERING: RINA MAPA

THOMAS AUSTIN
CECILE HALL
TUTOR IN RESIDENCE
55 YEARS OLD
30 YEARS OF
TEACHING EXPERIENCE

BDMP BDMP

HUFF!

HUFF! HUFF!

S-SORRY ...

PIPE DOWN, I'M TRYING TO SLEEP.

Mutter...

NOT AGAIN...

SHK SHK

JUST...

...A DREAM ?

IS IT BECAUSE OF THE HIJACKING?

SIGH ...

I'VE HAD SO MANY NIGHTMARES LATELY.

GULP

BLUP BLUP

I could introduce you to an excellent psychiatrist if you like.

SO MR. HENDERSON GAVE ME YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION, AND, WELL...

IT'S VERY NICE TO MEET YOU, MR. AUSTIN.

Care for some tea?

I'M SO GLAD THAT YOU DECIDED TO COME TALK TO ME.

WE MAY TELL OURSELVES THAT AS ADULTS WE SHOULD BE STRONGER, BUT THAT'S SIMPLY NOT HOW PEOPLE WORK.

DON'T FEEL ASHAMED! YOU'RE HAVING A PERFECTLY NATURAL REACTION TO A TERRIFYING EXPERIENCE.

I'M ASHAMED TO ADMIT IT, BUT I THINK THE RECENT HIJACKING MAY HAVE AFFECTED ME.

THE TRUTH IS, I HAVEN'T BEEN SLEEPING WELL LATELY.

WE'LL WORK TOGETHER TO RECLAIM YOUR LIFE!

MY OWN DAUGHTER WAS INVOLVED IN THE HIJACKING, SO I'M RATHER CLOSE TO THIS MYSELF.

IT CERTAINLY WOULD NOT HURT TO HAVE A MAN LIKE HIM IN MY DEBT.

...AND I HOPE YOU CAN RESPECT THAT.

WITH HIS LONG TENURE, HE WOULD HAVE MADE A GREAT MANY CONTACTS.

OF COURSE

THOMAS AUSTIN.

Yes, our team here is delighted to be of service.

I understand that some of our students are receiving counseling here as well?

HE SEEMS LIKE SUCH A NICE MAN.

AS THE TUTOR IN RESIDENCE, HE'S CLOSER TO THE STUDENTS THAN MOST FACULTY MEMBERS. THERE ARE LIKELY NUMEROUS PROMINENT EDEN ALUMNI WHO REMEMBER HIM FONDLY.

LET'S NIP THIS IN THE BUD BEFORE IT BECOMES A CHRONIC CONDITION.

...AND SO LATELY, I'VE BEEN WAKING FROM NIGHTMARES IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT.

DO YOU REMEMBER WHAT HAPPENS IN THE DREAMS?

OF COURSE, IF YOU FEEL THEY'RE TOO PAINFUL TO RELIVE...

NO, I JUST... I DON'T REMEMBER.

DO YOU THINK YOU COULD BE FLASHING BACK TO WHAT HAPPENED ON THE BUS?

HMM... I'M REALLY NOT SURE...

ALSO, MY HANDS HAVE BEEN SHAKING, AND I GET TIRED DURING THE DAY.

AND SOMETIMES I FIND MYSELF GETTING AGITATED FOR NO REASON.

カチャ TINK

AND THESE SYMPTOMS STARTED RIGHT AFTER THE INCIDENT?

I-I THINK SO.

THAT'S RIGHT.

IN COMPARING THE CONTENT OF HIS REMARKS WITH THE MOVEMENT OF HIS EYES, HIS VOCAL PITCH, AND OTHER INVOLUNTARY PHYSICAL GESTURES...

LISTEN, I, UM...

...VARIOUS MINOR INCONGRUITIES ARE BEGINNING TO JUMP OUT.

I WONDER IF I'LL BE ABLE TO CONTINUE TEACHING IN THIS CONDITION.

IF I WERE TO GET FIRED FROM EDEN...

AS I SAID EARLIER, THIS IS A CONDITION THAT CAN HAPPEN TO ANYONE. WITH TIME AND PATIENCE, WE CAN EXPECT TO SEE STEADY IMPROVEMENT.

I WOULDN'T BE TOO CONCERNED ABOUT THAT. MOST CASES OF ACUTE STRESS DISORDER RESOLVE THEMSELVES NATURALLY OVER TIME.

ALL RIGHT, SURE.

I'D ALSO LIKE YOU TO TRY SOME OF THE RELAXATION TECHNIQUES WE TALKED ABOUT.

I'LL GIVE YOU SOME LIGHT MEDICATION, AND WE'LL SEE HOW YOU RESPOND TO IT.

WELL, LET'S WRAP UP FOR TODAY.

I'M NOT SURE IF HE'S TRYING TO DECEIVE ME OR HIMSELF.

HE WAS LYING, WASN'T HE?

Here's your schedule for next week.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH, DOCTOR.

CHAK カチャ

I'LL SEE YOU BACK HERE NEXT THURSDAY.

CHAK

KCHAM

CHAK

YES, SIR.

ZERO MINUTES, 28 SECONDS.

Today's interaction time.

COULD YOU LOOK INTO IT?

JUST LAST NIGHT I WAS TOSSING AND TURNING SO MUCH THAT MY WIFE YELLED AT ME TO STOP...

Ha ha...

NO, I... I DON'T REALLY FEEL LIKE I'VE GOTTEN ANY BETTER...

LONG?

OH, YES. GOING ON ABOUT 20 YEARS NOW.

HAVE YOU AND YOUR WIFE BEEN MARRIED LONG?

HAVE YOU TOLD HER YOU'RE SEEKING HELP FOR IT?

I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT TALK-ING TO MY WIFE HAS TO DO WITH MY CONDITION.

HUH? LIKE I SAID, SHE TELLS ME TO PIPE DOWN ...

WHAT SORTS OF THINGS HAVE YOU AND YOUR WIFE TALKED ABOUT LATELY?

WHY NOT?

NO, OF COURSE NOT!

I COULDN'T POSSIBLY TELL HER THAT!

WELL... BECAUSE ...

THAT'S NOT WHAT I WOULD CALL TALKING ...

I'M TOO SCARED!!

I...

N-NEVER MIND ABOUT HER! GETTING BACK TO MY SYMPTOMS, I WAS HOPING THERE WAS MORE YOU COULD DO...

WORTH-LESS? YOU'RE A HIGHLY RE-SPECTED EDUCA-TOR.

IF SHE SAW ME AS BEING EVEN MORE WORTHLESS, I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT SHE'D SAY...

I MEAN ...

SCARED? WHY IS THAT?

?

I APOLOGIZE FOR THIS, MR. AUSTIN, BUT OVER THE LAST WEEK I'VE SPOKEN TO SEVERAL PEOPLE CLOSE TO YOU.

BDMP

...YOUR SYMPTOMS STARTED MONTHS BEFORE THE BUS INCIDENT.

FROM WHAT I UNDER-STAND...

Oh, sorry, I spaced out for a minute...

Mr. Austin? Mr. Austin, sir?

ZAAAA

I hope they'll be still during orienta-tion...

My hands keep shaking ...

NO ...

THAT CAN'T ....

BDMP

THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF THE HIJACKING ...

BDMP

Just a little sleep-deprived. I'll be fine!

You're looking rather pale, Thomas. Should I get someone else to lead the museum trip?

RMB

RMB

RMB

RMB

THERE'S A STRESSOR YOU'VE BEEN EXPOSED TO ON A DAILY BASIS, IS THERE NOT?

"Anything's fine" for dinner, huh? Then how about I grind you up into a hamburg steak?

ZAAAAA

If you got reported to the SSS for being such a slacker, I wonder if they'd get rid of you for me?

While you're doing the laundry, go ahead and give that brain of yours a good cleaning too!

N-NO! THIS IS ALL BECAUSE OF WHAT HAPPENED ...

N-NO... IT'S ME. THIS IS ALL MY FAULT!

Now that you're not here grinding your teeth all night, I'm finally getting a good night's sleep. Maybe I should leave you in the hospital forever!

On your dime, of course.

SOME-THING THAT SCARES YOU EVEN MORE THAN THE HIJACKING!

RMB

RMB

RMB

RMB

RMB

BUT THIS CAN'T BE HAPPENING! WHAT SORT OF MAN FEARS HIS OWN WIFE MORE THAN TERRORISTS?!

EVERY PERSON FEARS DIFFERENT THINGS. THE FIRST STEP IS TO ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPT HOW YOU FEEL.

PLEASE CALM DOWN, MR. AUSTIN.

WAHHHH!!

IT'S ESSENTIAL THAT YOU TALK TO HER ABOUT IT.

YOU ARE GOING TO CONFRONT YOUR FEAR.

DR. FORGER, WHAT AM I GOING TO DO...?

YOU STOOD HER UP ON YOUR ANNIVERSARY, YOU DON'T PARTICIPATE IN HOUSEWORK OR CHILDCARE, YOU LEAVE YOUR DIRTY SOCKS ALL AROUND, AND THEN THERE'S YOUR MOTHER ISSUES...

INVES-TIGATIVE REPORT

BUT I CAN'T IMAGINE WHAT THEY MIGHT BE!

LET'S TRY TO DISPAS-SIONATELY EXPLORE THE SOURCE OF HER FRUSTRA-TIONS.

NOOOO! NO MATTER WHAT I SAY, SHE ONLY EVER RESPONDS WITH A LONG SIGH!

WELL, I-I DO TRY TO BE AWARE OF MY WIFE'S EXPRESSIONS ...

SO I ALWAYS TRY TO PAY CLOSE ATTENTION TO HOW MY PARTNER REACTS TO THINGS AT HOME.

(AFTER ALL, MY TRUE IDENTITY BEING DISCOVERED OR MY MARRIAGE ENDING COULD LITERALLY BE A MATTER OF LIFE OR DEATH.)

CERTAINLY, MAINTAINING RELATION-SHIPS CAN BE QUITE DIFFICULT.

OH, TWILIGHT, NO CIVILIAN WOULD BE ABLE TO DO ALL THAT.

OH MY, YOU... YOU STUDY THINGS THAT CAREFULLY, HUH?

NOT TO MENTION THEIR HEART RATE, HOW OFTEN THEY BLINK, THE SOUND OF THEIR FOOTSTEPS...

IT'S MORE THAN JUST EXPRESSIONS. YOU CAN GAIN CLUES ABOUT YOUR PARTNER'S FEELINGS FROM THINGS LIKE THEIR TONE OF VOICE, RIGHT?

BY FACING YOUR FEARS, YOU CAN START GETTING THOSE FEELINGS OF TERROR UNDER CONTROL.

CONFRONTING ONE'S FEARS IS A PAINFUL PROCESS, BUT CON-TINUING TO RUN AWAY WILL ONLY HINDER YOUR RECOVERY.

I CAN'T. I JUST CAN'T.

IT'S ALSO IMPORTANT TO PROPERLY EXPRESS GRATITUDE TO YOUR PARTNER. AS WELL AS TO CLEARLY ACKNOWLEDGE YOUR ROLE IN THE HOUSEHOLD, AND DO ALL YOU CAN TO—

YOU'LL BE FINE. WE'LL GET THROUGH THIS TOGETHER!

BUT AM I CAPABLE OF THAT?

WE'LL NEED TO BEGIN BY TRYING TO EASE YOUR TRAUMA THROUGH TALK THERAPY.

JUST HOW AFRAID OF YOUR WIFE ARE YOU?

I'M TRYING HARD TO IMPROVE, BUT WHEN I TALK TO HER, THE WORDS WON'T COME OUT. OR MY HAND STARTS SHAKING, AND THEN THINGS GO WRONG.

IT'S OKAY, MR. AUSTIN. THIS ISN'T YOUR KITCHEN. YOU'RE IN A DOCTOR'S OFFICE! YOU'RE SAFE HERE!

BWAHH! STOP! DON'T LOOK AT ME THAT WAY WHEN YOU'RE HOLDING A CARVING KNIFE!

NOOOOO! STOP! DON'T RUB ONIONS IN MY EYES! I'M SORRY I ATE YOUR PUDDING WITHOUT ASKING!

あ AAAH あ あ

I'D LIKE YOU TO BEGIN BY RECALLING A TIME YOU FELT AFRAID OF YOUR WIFE.

CLOSE YOUR EYES. RELAX YOUR BREATHING.

OKAY ...

あ AAAH あ

... DIFFICULT ...

IF I WERE YOUR WIFE, I'D NEVER LET THAT HAPPEN, TWILIGHT. ♡

Wars waged over socks and pudding ...

あ AUTHENTIC MARRIAGES SURE SEEM...

AND THE WORLD BECAME JUST A LITTLE MORE PEACEFUL.

AH, THE FIRST STEP TOWARD PEACE.

LITTLE BY LITTLE, I'M BECOMING ABLE TO TALK TO MY WIFE AGAIN. THANK YOU, DR. FORGER!

LATER ...

To be continued!